

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 SY-04 SS-20 NSC-07 PRS-01 SSO-00

NSCE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 USIE-00 /062 W

----- 117918

O R 251215Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1074

USDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO/RUQMBE/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 443

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1485

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (FREDERICK B. DENT), SY

SUBJ: VISIT OF SECRETARY OF COMMERCE TO DAMASCUS FAIR

REF: STATE 160324

1. MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND FOREIGN TRADE, DR. MOHAMMAD IMADI CONFIRMED DURING CHARGE'S CALL YESTERDAY (JULY 24) THAT SARG HAD FORWARDED INVITATION FROM HIM TO SECRETARY OF COMMERCE DENT TO VISIT DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FAIR. IMADI SAID HE HOPED SECRETARY DENT WOULD ACCEPT AND ASKED US TO SUPPORT HIS INVITATION THROUGH OUR OWN COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM. IN PRINCIPLE WE SUPPORT IMADI'S INVITATION AND BELIEVE AMERICAN DAY WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT OCCASION FOR SECRETARY DENT TO VISIT DAMASCUS. IN THE REGARD, HOWEVER, WE ARE PROCEEDING ON ASSUMPTION THAT DENT VISIT WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN MID-AUGUST OF HIGH-LEVEL SYRIAN REPRESENTATIVE AT SECRETARY KISSINGER'S INVITATION TO DISCUSS INTER ALIA BILATERAL ECONOMIC QUESTIONS. MEANWHILE, WE WILL PASS ON TO IMADI SUBSTANCE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 3 (1) OF REFTEL.

2. FOR DEPARTMENT'S INFORMATION AND PLANNING, FOLLOWING SCHEDULE FOR AMERICAN DAY, AUGUST 12, 1974, AT DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FAIR:

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2000 - FLORDIA STATE UNIVERSITY BANK - OPENING

PERFORMANCE OF BAND AT STADIUM ON FAIR GROUNDS. RANKING
SYRIAN OFFICIALS AND FRIENDS WILL BE OUR GUEST AT PERFORMANCE.

2100 - OFFICIAL RECEPTION IN AMERICAN PAVILION (KENTUCKY
FRIED CHICKEN IS CATERING RECEPTION TO ADD AMERICAN FLAVOR
AND THUS A LITTLE COLOR TO WHAT FOR MOST OFFICIALS IS NIGHTLY
ROUND OF TRADITIONAL LACKLUSTER COCKTAIL PARTIES GIVEN BY
OTHER PAVILIONS. WE HOPE ALSO TO HAVE COMBO FROM FSU BAND
TO PLAY DURING RECEPTION. GUESTS WILL INCLUDE MINISTERS,
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, IMPORTANT SYRIAN BUSINESSMEN, SYRIAN
LEADERS IN OTHER NON-GOVERNMENT FIELDS.)

3. ON AMERICAN DAY SYRIAN TV AND RAIDO WILL HAVE SPECIALS
ON U.S. PAVILION AND LIFE IN AMERICA. WOULD BE APPROPRIATE,
WE BELIEVE, FOR SECRETARY DENT TO MAKE BRIEF STATEMENT AT FAIR
FOR USE BY LOCAL MEDIA. VISIT SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE CALL ON
MINISTER IMADI AND, OF COURSE THE MEETINGS REQUIRED TO
"MAKE AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ABOUT ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN
TWO COUNTRIES, ETC." PER REFTEL.

4. ON LATTER POINT, MINISTER IMADI IS HEAVILY INVOLVED TODAY
IN OPENING DAY CEREMONIES AT FAIR PLUS DINNER HE HOSTING
TONIGHT. WE ALSO KNOW THERE ARE 22 ECONOMIC DELEGATIONS IN
TOWN THIS WEEK. WE WILL TRY TO SEE HIM JUST AS SOON AS OPENING
EXERCISES ARE OVER TO ASCERTAIN MORE SPECIFICALLY WHAT IMADI
HAD IN MIND WHEN HE DRAFTED INVITATION LETTER TO SECRETARY
DENT AND WILL INFORM YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, TRADE FAIRS, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JUL 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974DAMASC01485
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740201-0912
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740719/aaaaapwz.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 160324
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 AUG 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <24 FEB 2003 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF SECRETARY OF COMMERCE TO DAMASCUS FAIR
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, SY, (DENT, FREDERICK B)
To: STATE BEIRUT
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005